









THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

JEFFREY MICHAEL BURNS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF FINE ARTS


IN

PAINTING

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

WINTER 1995



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**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
**FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH**

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

Final Visual Presentation

submitted by JEFFREY MICHAEL BURNS in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art.



**The University of Alberta**

**RELEASE FORM**

NAME OF AUTHOR JEFFREY MICHAEL BURNS

TITLE OF THESIS FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION DEGREE

FOR WHICH THESIS WAS GRANTED MASTER OF FINE ARTS

YEAR THIS DEGREE WAS GRANTED 1995

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DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

GRADUATE STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

I hereby release the following works for incorporation into the University Collections,  
University of Alberta, as part of the Master of Fine Arts Thesis Collection:

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	SIZE
DUPLEX	1995	OIL ON CANVAS	72" x 84"





Jeffrey Burns  
Down Garden Paths

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

"the pastoral is outmoded.  
The gardens of history are being replaced  
by the sites of time."

Robert Smithson

"Landscape is the world under the gaze of man."  
"Landscape is not nature. It is a mirror reflecting our fears and fantasies  
about mankind's place in the world."

Martin Puryear

While there are formal and thematic reasons for landscape painting's enduring popularity, it has also revealed something of its ethos and context of creation. Contemporary landscape painters and photographers know, as does their audience, that what we have learned of the condition of the natural world precludes the possibility of representing a truly pristine, pure scene or setting. Our intervention in natural systems has been most pervasive.

Although we have good reason to be more fearful of our surroundings, we are growing increasingly aware of our dependence on natural systems. This awareness, coupled with the influences of Feminist and Postmodern theory, is contributing to a particular understanding of our position in the world. It questions the relation of dominance between ourselves (Subjects) and the environment - including other persons (Objects). Landscape as a theme in art is, therefore, imbued with far more communicative potential than mere topographical description. Landscape is a social, cultural and political construct. It is a repository of history and myth. And it is, like our bodies, a political battleground.

We all carry interior visions of landscapes which allegorize or ironize our moods, memories, fears and desires. In art, as in the creation of a garden, interior and exterior visions of landscapes may merge. In reflecting on what one sees in a landscape, one may better understand oneself.

Through my work I explore allegories, signs and metaphors for our involvement in natural systems. My concern over the nature of this involvement is deep, and often pessimistic. Through creating these images, I hope to reconcile some apparent contradictions and reveal some signs of the promise of transcendence.





Jeffrey Burns  
MFA (Painting) Thesis Exhibition - "Down Garden Paths"  
Fine Arts Building Gallery - November 29 to December 10, 1995

Slide List

Plateau 1995  
oil on canvas  
18 1/8 x 18 1/8 in.  
46 x 46 cm

Oasis 1995  
oil on canvas  
18 1/8 x 18 1/8 in.  
46 x 46 cm

Emulous Gardener 1995  
oil on canvas  
62 x 48 1/8 in.  
157,5 x 122,2 cm

Approach 1995  
oil on paper on masonite  
13 x 11 in.  
33 x 28 cm

Efflorescence 1995  
oil on paper on masonite  
18 1/2 x 13 1/16 in.  
47 x 33 cm

Duplex 1995  
oil on canvas  
72 1/8 x 84 in.  
183 x 213,5 cm

Generation 1995  
oil on canvas  
30 x 30 in.  
76,4 x 76,4 cm

Dormancy 1995  
oil on canvas  
90 1/8 x 90 1/8 in.  
229 x 229 cm

Niche 1994  
acrylic and mixed media on masonite  
11 x 11 in.  
28 x 28 cm

Solarium 1995  
oil on canvas  
48 1/8 x 48 1/8 in.  
122 x 122 cm

Greenhouse Nave 1994  
oil on canvas  
66 1/4 x 48 1/8 in.  
168,3 x 122,2 cm

Aperture 1995  
oil on linen  
14 x 11 1/4 in.  
35,6 x 28,6 cm

Inclination 1995  
oil on canvas  
59 1/2 x 41 5/8 in.  
151 x 105,8 cm

Catalysis 1995  
oil on canvas  
90 1/8 x 90 1/8 in.  
229 x 229 cm

Tower 1993-94  
oil on canvas  
40 1/4 x 36 3/4 in.  
102,2 x 93,4 cm

Terrenity Series No. 5 1995  
(from a series of 23 exhibited works)  
Polaroid image transfer on Arches paper  
3 1/8 x 4 in.  
8 x 10 cm

Installation View  
Fine Arts Building Gallery, U. of A.  
Nov. - Dec. 1995

Installation View  
Fine Arts Building Gallery, U. of A.  
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